

REMARKS

Claims 1-15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Duensing et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,444,243) in view of Sherrill et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,584,938), Sherrill (U.S. Patent No. 5,673,653), Nishimori et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,590,079) and Perlberg et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,223,693). In particular, claim 1 stands rejected based on Duensing et al. in view of Sherrill et al. These rejections are respectfully traversed. The cited references do not disclose the invention as set forth in claim 1 or render it obvious, and the differences between the cited references and the present invention, particularly as recited in claim 1 render claims 1-15 patentably distinct.

Sherrill et al. disclose a dog bone with jerky pieces and method for making that includes a composite of animal hide bits, adherent, and discrete pieces of a flavored product interspersed in the composite. Duensing et al. disclose a rawhide animal chew and method producing the same that includes combining marinade with rawhide.

Duensing et al. and Sherrill et al. fail to disclose the feature of **coating the rawhide chew toys with meat** as set forth in claim 1. In addition, Duensing et al. fail to disclose preparing and processing the meat, and Sherrill et al. only disclose interspersing jerky pieces in the rawhide by a molding-type method. In the present invention, meat is coated on the rawhide without a mold, so applicant's method can save on the cost and is not taught by Duensing et al. and Sherrill et al.

In Duensing et al. the rawhide chew toy only comprises rawhide combined with marinade. There is no meat or jerky piece and the taste of the rawhide chew toy is only provided by the marinade. However in the present invention of claim 1, the rawhide chew toy is not only coated with meat, but the meat also processed to increase the taste of the meat. For animals such as dogs, meat or jerky pieces provide more attraction than just combining the rawhide chew toy with marinade, especially if the meat or jerky pieces are further processed to increase the taste. The attraction

provided by processing the meat offers much more motivation for dogs to chew the rawhide chew toy and increase the dogs' desire to chew the rawhide chew toy to improve their oral hygiene. As set forth in claim 1, the present invention is more effective than and patentably distinct from Duensing et al.

Sherrill et al. teach an animal chew toy formed from rawhide and jerky pieces, in which the jerky pieces are interspersed within and mixed with the rawhide. In contrast, the rawhide chew toy of claim 1 involves forming rawhide chew toys coated with meat processed to increase the taste and prepared to maintain the freshness of the meat. When dogs chew the rawhide chew toy of Sherrill et al. dogs will eat the rawhide pieces with jerky pieces and fail in the purpose of improving their oral hygiene. Additionally, the rawhide pieces of Sherrill's patent are not stable enough to provide dogs with chewing for long time and are unable to satisfy the natural instinct to chew of dogs. The invention of claim 1 is therefore patentably distinct from Sherrill et al.

The combination of Sherrill et al. and Duensing et al. does not result in applicant's invention of claim 1. Such combination would result in a rawhide chew toy consisting of rawhide pieces mixed with jerky pieces and combined with marinade. Thus the combination of Sherrill et al. and Duensing et al. continues to lack the feature of **coating the rawhide chew toys with meat** as recited in claim 1. Therefore, the present invention is more effective in improving a dog's oral hygiene than Sherrill et al. and Duensing et al. and is patentably distinct from either Sherrill et al. or Duensing et al. or the combination of these two references.

Since claim 1 is in condition for allowance claims 2-15 depending on claim 1 are also patentable. The other art of record has been considered but is not seen adversely to affect the patentability of claim 1.

As a result of the foregoing, applicant submits that claims 1-15 are in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested. If any points remain in issue, which the Examiner feels would best be resolved by either a personal or a telephone interview, he is urged to contact Applicant's attorney at the exchange listed below.

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Respectfully submitted,

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